

NEW-YORK CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, AND PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSALIST.

DEVOTED TO THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE AND MISCELLANY OF CHASTE AND MORAL TENDENCY.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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Prize Tale,

Written for the MESSENGER and UNIVERSALIST.

THE CONTRAST—Or which is the Christian? BY MRS. SARAH A. DOWNER.

"And now my dear mother," said Eudora Fleming, (placing a stool under her mother's feet, and her knitting work on the table,) "we shall have a long afternoon; my brothers do not return till evening; and if we are not interrupted, may I hope you will relate the narrative you promised me?"

Most willingly, my child. I have several reasons for wishing you to become acquainted with the history of your connexions; and this afternoon I shall gratify your desire. But in order to do this I must go back into my family history, and speak freely of the faults and errors of near relatives: this nothing could induce me to do, but the hope of producing an impression on your mind, that will abide with you through life.

Your wish was simply to learn something of those cousins, whose early fate you have so often deplored, while separating the thick branches of weeping willow growing by the side of their graves; and which so nearly hide the inscriptions on the white tomb-stones, as merely to leave in sight—"Martha, aged 20, and Maria, aged 19 years; only daughters of Timothy and Susan Hansen." Short as these words are, and unimportant to a careless traveler; they bring with them a flood of recollections that fill the eye with tears, and swell the heart with sorrow. But to my story:

Your two uncles, Timothy and William, with myself, composed all the family of your grandfather Hansen. We were educated in the Episcopal form of worship, to which both my parents were attached, and in which attachment they continued during life. My brothers were several years my senior. Timothy, the eldest, engaged while very young in a large manufacturing business, with the father of the lady he afterwards married. My brother William studied the profession of Law, of which he has since proved himself so efficient a member; and never was there a more striking dissimilarity between two brothers than was evinced in the characters of Timothy and William, as they advanced to manhood. Timothy, proud and overbearing, possessed a restless ambition, and an eager desire for wealth, that could not be satisfied. He early became attached to a very lovely but poor girl in a neighboring village, whose parentage was respectable, and who gave to him

her young affections with the promise of her hand; but he left her a prey to disappointment, and wedded the only daughter and heiress of the gentleman with whom he was a junior partner. Despicable as this was, he was a loser by it in domestic happiness at least; for his wife possessed little more than her father's immense wealth to recommend her.

Different, far different, was the choice of my brother William. "Though my daughter cannot bring you riches," said the gray haired father of his bride, "she will give you a cultivated mind; and a heart whose warmth and purity will be the best safeguards of its virtue." "Portionless she may be; but her virtues place her above rubies," said the generous lover, taking the hand that was soon after his; and which true to her vow, has scattered the blossoms of cheerfulness and peace over the rugged pathway of life, in which they have had to climb.

As my brothers married with different views, so also they set out in life with different expectations. Timothy united himself to the Calvinistic order of religion, to please his wife and father-in-law; and as he was fond both of power and popularity, he made obeisance to the one that he might the more readily grasp at and wield the other; or in other words, he was willing to bow before the shrine of popular opinion, that he might exercise the power vested in their strength. Such was my brother Timothy. All the fine and noble feelings of the soul were thrown aside, or stifled by the master passion of avarice and a desire to rule. No workmen were employed by him who did not profess the same religious tenets. His charities, (if giving large sums to foreign missions, and to societies for the education of young men for the ministry, can be called charities,) were confined in the same channel. None who professed a different belief were in any degree countenanced by him. On the death of my parents I took up my residence with him, and if his character as a man breathed a spirit of intolerance, in his family he was still more unamiable. It was seldom he bestowed any marks of affection upon his children; the youngest he sometimes betrayed a fondness for; she evidently was his favorite; but his heart was composed of the sterner qualities of our nature, and he was feared rather than beloved. I at that time attributed his increasing austerity to the influence of the change in his religious opinions, and in consequence gave more attention to the subject.

Though ever opposed to the Calvinistic faith, I found upon close investigation that my own creed was but little better; and that opposed as they stand to each other, there is but a shade of difference between Calvinism and Arminianism. (The principles of the latter and those of the Church of England era substantially the same.) I had been educated in the belief of an endless hell as prepared for sinners, and a more intimate acquaintance with mankind, and above all with my own sinful heart, taught me that all men were sinners; that we were

prone to evil continually, and therefore there was no chance of escape from the dreadful punishment in store for (as it appeared to me) a whole world of sinners. Miserable were my reflections. I knew I must inevitably be lost and undone. True there was a Saviour, and we were told he died for all; but what benefit was that to me when the salvation offered was conditional, and upon terms I knew it were morally impossible for myself or any other erring child of humanity to attain. "We must become perfect, like him whose name we bear." "Blameless, spotless, like the Lamb of God." And if for a long life we should maintain this perfection of christian excellence, one sinful deed at the last moment, were sufficient to blot out an age of obedience, and to send the careless sinner down to the fathomless pit of destruction, with the frowns of an angry God to wither his very soul. Oh my child this is a dreadful doctrine—the creed of Calvin is repugnant to all the dictates of reason or revelation. The man, also, excites our dislike from the spirit of persecution he evinced towards those who differed from him in faith; and the single act he was guilty of, in burning Michael Servetus for presuming to oppose him, shows the character of the man, and stamps his name with infamy as black as those of the Romish Fathers, who deluged the sanguinary plain of Smithfield with streams of human blood, because their dying victims refused to bow before the altar of Priestcraft. Calvin sends thousands and thousands of the human race to a hell of never-ending woe, and tells of its being the good pleasure of God, that he might be glorified in the misery of his creatures, and that nothing can save the doomed—neither the blood of Christ nor a life of piety. We turn with shuddering horror from the presence of such a God, and our despairing souls cry for annihilation. But what was the difference between this soul-harrowing doctrine and the one in which I was brought up? None. My heart told me there was none; the conclusions we arrived at were the same—misery, never-ending misery, to the greater portion of the human race. Oh the horrors of a life of doubt and incertitude!

I was aware that my brother's principles were erroneous—that they exerted an unhappy influence upon his family economy; yet I was dissatisfied with my own, and silently saw his children reluctantly listen to the account of a God, who was depicted in any other than a pleasing character. Martha, the eldest child, was a light-hearted, volatile girl, and consequently a source of great uneasiness to her gloomy parents. Her frank nature was oftentimes pained by being told that her innocent mirth was displeasing to God, who would punish her for such sin. In short, the daily and hourly character of God, as exhibited to their view, was that of a relentless tyrant, whose service demands a surrender of whatever is pleasing or desirable in life, and that endless punishment would be the consequence of a refusal to comply with the demands. I pitied the poor children, and wished to teach

them better. But what better did I know? I wished to tell them that God was their friend, but I knew not how long he would continue a friend, and therefore I said nothing. I was very unhappy, and gladly accepted an invitation to spend a few days with my brother William. In his house all was harmony and cheerfulness.— Their little children were taught that their parents were their best friends, and exacted nothing from them but what their own happiness made it proper to demand. They were taught to obey their slightest wish, because nothing could be requested that was not intended for their good. To speak freely on all subjects, that they might be directed by the lessons of experience, that were ever ready to instruct. They were taught to consider God as their parent, and the Father of all, and to reverence and obey him in that sacred character; and that although an earthly parent may sometimes err in judgment, He cannot err, being infinite in all his attributes.

The first day of my visit was one of greater happiness than I had tasted for months. The unaffected kindness of my brother and his wife; the innocent endearments of their blooming family was a cordial to my drooping heart; and when the hour arrived for the little ones to retire, and unbidden they knelt down before their mother to repeat their evening prayers, and which earnestly broke from their little warm hearts in language of child-like simplicity, I thought how beautiful! "From the mouth of babes and sucklings He hath perfected praise." This was what I wanted. It was love, pure love kindled at the shrine of gratitude, unquenched by the damp and noisome vapors of Partialism. But how was this to be obtained? How could they feel so, or joy in their little children, when they knew not what their fate might be?

When alone with my brother and his wife, I mentioned to them my doubts and anxieties. I felt that unless some relief was afforded my tortured heart, I could not long survive. I expressed to them the dissatisfaction I felt in my own religious creed, where the salvation of none could be considered certain; that my brother Timothy's system of faith was still more unsatisfactory, and which I could not reconcile with the word of God; and even this pure source of light was daily becoming more and more obscure, and my mind fast settling in chaotic doubt.

"I am the resurrection and the life," began my brother. I started at these words, and overcame by a variety of emotions, burst into tears. "Eliza," said he, tenderly taking my hand, "do you ever think of the Saviour? and have you ever reflected on the import of the words just mentioned, and their connexion? 'Whosoever believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.' You profess a belief in this Saviour, and yet deny his positive declaration; else why these doubts?"

"Ah, there it is, 'we shall never die.' And who would not rather sleep, never, never to awake again, than to live on in endless misery and woe?"

"And who hath taught you, sister, this was to be your fate? You never learned it in the Bible, for this teaches that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, God will gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him. We are told Christ was made the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but the sins of the whole world. We are called the 'redeemed of the Lord,' and 'heirs of glory.' Why then do you torment yourself by ascribing to our Heavenly Father intentions you would shudder at an earthly parent's betraying. We are told that 'God is love,' and that he will do all his pleasure. And can the pleasure of a being, whose nature is 'love,' be otherwise than good? No,

my sister; and good only shall be the result."

"But this is Universalism."

"It is Universalism, and the only doctrine found in the sacred writings. It begins with Genesis and ends but with Revelations. The promise first made to Abraham, in the twelfth chapter of Genesis, is mentioned frequently throughout the old Testament, and again repeated in the new, with the additional oath of Jehovah that this *should* be accomplished. And because he could swear by none greater, he swore by himself, that in Christ, who was the promised seed, all the nations and families of the earth should be blessed. Thus are all men made heirs of the promised glory by the immutable oath of the Creator of all flesh. This is the anchor of the soul, and were there no other declarations, this alone, this oath and promise of God, were sufficient to establish the future happiness of the great family of man. Our own sins make us aliens from God, and at war with his holy spirit—not that he was ever at enmity with us, for we read that he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that the world through him might be saved and not perish, even while we were dead in trespasses and sins. And what was it we were to be saved from? Not surely from an endless hell, for of this we have no account. But the Evangelist saves us from all doubt on the subject: 'His name shall be called Jesus, (that is Saviour,) for he shall save his people from their sins.'

"This, my dear Eliza, is the plan of salvation as laid down in the sacred scriptures. There are threatened punishments for sinners, and those who persist in a course of evil doing, but no where do they extend to a future state of being. We are told that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God, and this is emphatically true. But what is hell? Is it not described to be a state of darkness, of death; is not the sinner constantly in this state while he continues to do evil? and was it any other than this David was delivered from when he says: 'Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell'? We are told the way of the transgressor is hard. And is it not so? Have you, my dear sister, ever transgressed without finding it was hard; and is it not our own wickedness that makes us unhappy? But this shall not always exist. No; the power, the wish to sin, shall be subdued in us; Christ will reign till he has put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy to be destroyed is death.

"Oh, what a world of light and immortality is now opened to our view! There shall be neither pain, nor sickness, nor sorrow—remember, Eliza, *no sorrow*—in the glorious world Christ has gone to prepare. 'If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me;' and this, dear sister, by the strong cord of love; and 'nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' And now, Eliza, let me entreat you, depend no more upon the creeds of human error; but learn to consider God as he has declared himself, and as he is represented by all his holy prophets and apostles, and you will find him a being of all love and gentleness; mercy and long suffering, slow to anger and a being also of justice. We desire to rob him of none of his attributes, and glory in the justice that is tempered with mercy."

A ray of heavenly light now rose upon my darkened soul, and that night I retired not to my bed. Repeatedly, and on my bended knees, did I read over the consoling passages that are every where scattered through the New Testament of Life; and with feelings of heart-felt rapture I thanked my God, that I could now understand and apply them, not only to myself but to all. Sweet and pleasant were my meditations, which resulted in my becoming, what I still continue—A UNIVERSALIST.

As I now resided alternately with either brother,

many were my opportunities for observing the different effects of their different religious principles, not only as adopted in their respective families, but in regulating their own conduct as men. I was present during a conversation between them, which I will relate, as it obviously showed the governing principle of each.

"And so, William, after marrying a beggar, you carry your folly to its utmost pitch of extravagance, by professing yourself a Universalist; as if your situation were not already sufficiently obscure, without throwing yourself entirely out of society."

"And pray what objection, my more fortunate brother, can you have to Universalism?"

"Objection! oh, none, certainly. It is a very accommodating doctrine, and a very pleasant one, I make no doubt, to those who deceive themselves enough to think it is true. But let me tell you, William, your circumstances are narrow, and if you expect to become noticed, or to rise in your profession you must avow other sentiments, and unite yourself to some more popular church than a Universalist one."

"And would you have me a hypocrite? and avow a belief in what I know to be an error, for the paltry advantage I might gain in being noticed by men whose acquaintance I do not desire, and in whose integrity I place not the confidence you appear to? I am aware that popular opinion is on the side of Partialism, and in embracing the faith of a world's salvation I was provident enough to count the cost; and no worldly advantage I might gain, or popular favor that could be bestowed on me, would in any degree compensate for the peace, and hope, and joy, this blessed belief gives me, and which is the only doctrine taught us by the word of God."

"Ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you!" doubtless; and when this phrenzy of feeling has passed, you may possibly condescend to learn there are minor considerations to be attended to, if you expect to make a living for your family."

"I shall use my best endeavors to do this; the rest I leave to my Father in Heaven, to give or withhold, according as he sees best."

"Well, well, I did not come here to quarrel with your doctrine, though I believe it was invented by the arch fiend himself, my purpose was very different; and if you choose to follow my advice, and manage as I direct, you need not remain much longer the poor pettifogger you are at present."

"Speak on, that I may judge."

"You may not possibly know that young Bristow, the only child of old Deacon B., and who inherited all his father's large estate, besides an immense sum he received with his wife, is on the eve of ruin?"

"I know he has long been on the road to ruin, and have many times warned him of what would be the inevitable consequences of his life of riot and dissipation. But I did not know his course was so nearly run, and I sincerely deplore the folly that has led to this, and pity his wife and children."

"I am not speaking of that now; I pity them to be sure; but we must all do the best we can for ourselves, and if Bristow will be such a wretch, he deserves to suffer. I am told he purposes applying to you to arrange his affairs; though they are in such a terribly confused state he has no hopes of saving anything.— Now I know the estate to be a good one, with all these incumbrances, and can be made to pay well; and my advice to you is—offer to settle all his debts, pay him a certain sum, and take the estate into your own hands. He will be glad to do this, for he knows no more of business than a child, and indeed is not fit to have such a place, as he cannot take care of it."

"Are you serious, Timothy, in what you propose?"

"Serious! why certainly; will there be any great difficulty in doing this?"

"Yes, my brother. There is an insurmountable 'difficulty' to my becoming such a villain. 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' is the command of the blessed Master, whom I serve; and were I to take advantage of poor Bristow's embarrassment, and turn his wife and children penniless as it were into the street, I should become hateful to myself, as well as guilty in the sight of God."

"But are not such things done every day? Did not his father, the old deacon, who was thought a patron of piety, make nearly all his money by taking enormous usury? And this would only be following his example."

"I take no man for a pattern but Him whose life was sinless; and in following his example, my brother, I cannot do this thing. If Bristow applies to me as an honest man, and in the sight of God, I will assist him if I can."

This very much displeased your uncle, who called him "a fool" for his integrity.

"And is not my uncle Timothy an honest man? mother," said Eudora.

He is considered so, as are a thousand others, who yet do not hesitate to take every advantage of the necessities of their neighbors. But to proceed—Mr. Bristow called as was expected; he appeared very wretched about the probable fate of his family; and expressed sincere contrition for the thoughtless folly that had reduced them, as he feared, to a state of beggary. He gave full power into your uncle's hands, as he knew not what was to be done or how to proceed.—Your uncle immediately advertised for all claims to be presented; these were found on examination not to be as large as were apprehended, and which the sale of some growing timber nearly covered. Arrangements were soon made for the liquidation of the remaining debts; and in a much shorter time than could have been expected, he had the satisfaction of congratulating his client on the recovery of a clear estate that would maintain his family in comfort. Oh, the gratitude of the desponding husband and father! He called him his benefactor, his saviour, and from this time commenced a new course of life. Would the wresting of this man's property, though considered perfectly honest by the world, have afforded your uncle half the satisfaction he found in this upright course? No, my child, and if ever you are tempted to do wrong, call to mind the precepts and example of Christ, and I fear not for the result.

Many other circumstances might be related, illustrating the difference between genuine piety and the semblance of it only, as exhibited in the two families; and I well recollect your aunt Susan's refusing to pay a poor widow eighteen pence a day for spinning, at the very time she sent a large sum of money, besides a number of new articles of clothing, to a distant benevolent institution. The poor woman who was obliged to take a dollar for her week's work, deprecated the meanness that curtailed her established price, and tearfully bent her steps to the lowly cot, where her little family were patiently enduring wants her industry could scarce supply. And here, Eudora, I would take the opportunity of impressing on your mind, the injustice, as well as dishonesty, of reducing the price of wages. If the laborer is worthy of his hire, give it cheerfully; and encourage industry and a spirit of independence; for unless the poor are encouraged by a reasonable compensation for their services, they must either resort to crime, or take advantage of the charity of institutions, whose aid should be bestowed only on those who are unable to labor. But I know ladies who patronize almost every charitable society, that will yet haggle about paying a poor washerwoman her just demands.

My brother Timothy's children possessed naturally good dispositions, though I saw but little

of them as they advanced to maturity; the first years of my married life being spent in a distant state. On my return, after the lapse of a few years, to my native village, I found those I had left mere children, fast approaching to be men and women. James, the eldest son of William, was a fine manly youth, with all his father's virtues and his mother's gentleness of character. The other children also excited my pleasure by their refined and amiable deportment. I enquired after Timothy's family, and was grieved in hearing there existed but little intercourse between them. It appeared that the summer before, James had frequently met his cousin Martha rambling among the woods and glens of this romantic country; both were ardent admirers of nature, and a similarity of tastes led them frequently in the same haunts. The growing intimacy which their relationship authorized was displeasing to my brother Timothy, who rudely accused James of endeavoring to engage the affections of his cousin, and prohibited her in future from extending her walks beyond their own premises. Unkind as this was, it was also unjust; neither had thought of any thing beyond the pleasure they took in each other's society; and though assured of this, both by his daughter and nephew, he chose to think differently; and it was said his harshness had affected the health of Martha, who was in a rapid decline.

I called on them the next day, and soon perceived that the unpleasant traits in Timothy's disposition had increased with his years. His wife, also, appeared more formal and self-righteous than ever. I requested to see my niece and was shown into her room. She had always been very dear to me from a child, and I now beheld her a slight and elegant woman, with the symptoms of decay written in characters too legible to be mistaken, and which, like the gleams of a beautiful sunset, are thrown over the victims of consumption, growing brighter and brighter, till near the period they are entirely withdrawn from our view. I was instantly recognized. "Dear Aunt," said she, throwing her slender arms around me, "how often have I thought of you, and wished for your counsel to direct me. But you will now reside among us, and the little while I remain on earth will be blest with your society."

Yes, Martha; but you are not lonely I presume? your parents, your sister—"Oh, I am not complaining," said she, quickly; "but yet I am very often alone. Everard is now at College, and Maria does not like to sit much in a sick chamber; and when my parents are with me they always avoid the subjects of conversation I most delight in."

But I trust you have been made acquainted with sources of consolation independent of all these? There is a fountain, dear girl, whose streams are never dry, from whence we may draw lasting pleasure and enjoyments, that will fit us for our sometimes hard duty in this world, and prepare us for a life of righteousness beyond the grave.

"Yes, dear aunt, though it is but lately I have known this truth, or took pleasure in the word that is now my only comfort; and until I conversed with my cousin James, I did not love God or delight in the Holy Scriptures. He led my mind from the contemplation of nature, 'up to nature's God,' and now I know God loves all his creatures. I dwell with rapture on his character, and adore the love that gave to us a Saviour; and I think if I could once more see my cousin, and thank him for portraying these truths, I should meet death contentedly."

The wish was natural, and I promised to speak to her father on the subject. "See him!" he exclaimed, a frown of hatred setting on his dark brow. "Never shall she see him, if I have power to prevent it. Would you have me admit to the bedside of my dying daughter, one

whose relationship I disclaim? who has taught my child disobedience; who has destroyed the religious principles instilled into her mind from infancy; who taught her to mock at the piety of her parents, and who has infused into her wicked heart the illusive hopes of his own accursed doctrine! And after all this, you urge me to admit him, that he may insult me to my face, by the avowal of his hateful principles!" "Brother," said I, interrupting him, "I cannot hear this. You know you are slandering an innocent person." "I care not," said he passionately; "Eliza, I know your principles well; and rather than permit a child of mine to believe in the doctrines you so artfully uphold, I would—yes I would sooner see them become Infidels—or lay dead before me."

I shrunk back with instinctive horror; alas, my child, it is no light thing to provoke the judgments of God, and fearfully has this since come to pass. I returned to the sick room to relate the ill success of my mission. For a moment a tear trembled in her eye, but was quickly brushed aside. "I see how it is," said she; "Father is only angry with James for believing in a different doctrine; but I shall meet him in a better world, where there is nothing but love. Yes, and father's heart will be softer then, for we shall all be taught of God." I pressed my lips to her pale forehead, my heart was too full to permit me to speak; and that same night, in the full hope of a blessed immortality, the dear saint closed her eyes upon a short, yet not entirely joyless life.

Whatever may have been your uncle's reflections, he never gave them utterance; Martha had not been a favorite. She possessed an inquiring mind, that sometimes ventured to question her father's favored sentiments, and this alone, had been the head and front of her offending.

I shall pass over a few years in silence; and commence from the time Everard, their only son left college, and entered the Theological Seminary at ——. The design of making him a minister, had been a cherished one of your uncle's; and he looked forward to the season of his ordination, as one that would advance his own religious importance; and make him envied among his brethren. On his first return home, Everard was accompanied by a friend. The stranger had insinuating manners; and soon won the good graces of his entertainers. They made a prolonged visit; but although their visitor had been unremitting in his attentions to Maria, and had sought her love by every subtle art, he took leave without saying a word that could be construed into a wish to have their acquaintance continued. Her spirits entirely forsook her after their departure. Her faded looks and evident indisposition was attributed to the loss of her lover; but, alas, the spoiler had been there! I cannot dwell on this dark period of my narrative. Great and overwhelming was the blow to her parents when it did come. Their wounded pride banished the wretched daughter from the parental roof. In this dreadful agony of feelings, spurned by her household, she sought protection of my brother William. He received her, and gently strove to calm her agitated mind, intending on the morrow to see his brother; but ere that morrow dawned, a helpless unowned babe was introduced into existence, and its hapless mother lay a still and silent corpse.

I pass over the terrible anguish this event occasioned your uncle. Maria was the child of his affection, and though he refused to see her infant, had her remains laid by the side of her sister.

"And can the little orphan, Agnes, who lives on the bounty of my uncle William, be that child?"

Your conjectures are right. Agnes is that unfortunate child; an orphan in every sense of

the word; though that state is softened as much as it can be, by the kindness of your uncle's family. A particular account of the melancholy occurrence was instantly forwarded to Everard. With the letter open in his hand, he rushed to the apartment of his false friend. He was not there. He sought him in the library where he was conversing with several others. Wrought to madness by the injury done his family, he accused him of his baseness, and bitterly reproached his villainy. The individuals present interfered; but he was too angry to recollect himself, and demanded satisfaction. He was dismissed from the Seminary; and put under an immediate arrest by the cowardly betrayer of innocence.

Everard gave bonds, and returned home. His hopes blighted, his ambition crushed, and burning with unsatisfied revenge, he shut himself from society, a complete misanthrope. For a long time he remained in this state. He now occasionally mixes with the world, but has become that most miserable of all created beings—an unbeliever in the existence of a God.

The religious instruction Timothy gave his children, was wrong, fundamentally wrong; and the consequences have been disastrous. Broken in spirit, and bent under the weight of infirmities, he finds his long toiled for wealth to be only vexation of spirit, and vanity to its possessor. You have frequently, Eudora, betrayed an aversion to him, but you must learn to conquer these feelings. He has been deeply afflicted, and it is not for feeble man to raise a finger on those whom God has sorely stricken.

Your uncle William has pursued a different course through life. He early added to his zeal, knowledge; and in the education of their family, he has been assisted by his truly amiable and pious wife. The example set before their children was good; it inspired their love and confidence. They took the New-Testament for their guide, and taught that He who gave his son, has with him freely given us all things; and that no good thing has been withheld from us; it being the abuse of these gifts, and not the use of them, that constitutes sin, in which there is no pleasure; and that punishment will most assuredly follow the transgressor. The effects of their system of education, could not be otherwise than beneficial; and this knowledge of God, with the entire dependance on His will, that was early instilled into them, laid the foundation for their excellence; and though my brother and his wife have had all the disadvantages of poverty to contend with, they have the satisfaction of having brought up the best family of children of any one within a large circle round, and they are now bright examples that the upright in heart, even in this world, are blessed.

You have now, my child, been made acquainted with the history you so much desired to know. Revolve well in your mind what you have heard; contrast the characters of your two uncles, and then say—which is the christian.

Original.

GEHENNA.

The learned doctors of the Church build their theory of endless suffering on the meaning of the word that heads this article. They aver, it is true, that many passages of the Bible plainly teach this doctrine, wherein the said word does not occur. Still they do not even pretend that endless suffering is to be endured in any other place than *Gehenna*. And when they cite passages to prove that a portion of the human race will be endlessly tormented, they always mean that this vast amount of torment is to be suffered in *Gehenna*, and in no other place.

It is freely admitted, by all learned men of every denomination, that *Gehenna* is a compound of two Hebrew words, *gee*, land or val-

ley; and *Hinnom*, the name of the owner of the particular valley to which this word was applied. The first mention that is made of this place, in the Bible, is in the 15th chap. of Joshua:—"And the border went up by the valley of the Son of Hinnom, unto the south side of the Jebusite; the same is Jerusalem: and the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward." In process of time this valley became noted as a place of resort for the idolatrous Jews, where they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, i. e., to be burnt alive as a sacrifice to the Ammonitish god, Moloch. 2 Chron. xxviii, 3. King Josiah, in his reign, defiled this place, prevented resort to it for a season, by casting into it the filth and offal of the city; 2 Kings, xxiii, 10. A fire was there kept constantly burning to consume this vast amount of filth; and the worms continually prayed upon that portion of it which, in its abundance, lay about unconsumed. Hence the propriety of connecting *Gehenna* with fire and worms. The expression, "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," would readily be understood to relate to the notorious valley of Hinnom. These things were all associated in the mind of a Jew. But there would be a manifest absurdity in supposing that worms and fire prey on the immortal spirits of men after their perishable bodies are destroyed!

This unanimity of sentiment in regard to the meaning of the word under consideration, may be carried still farther. All are agreed that the prophets of the Old Testament used *Gehenna*, or the valley of Hinnom, as an emblem or comparison, by which to set forth the wretched condition in which a continuance in wickedness would inevitably involve the Jewish people.—An indisputable proof of this fact is furnished in the 19th chap. of Jeremiah: "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter. And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives; and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. * * * * And they shall bury them in Tophet, till there be no place to bury." The reader will please examine the whole chapter. Now nothing can be more evident than that the prophet here uses Tophet, or the valley of Hinnom, as an emblem of the temporal calamities that were to come upon the Jewish people. This view of the subject is confirmed by the last verse of the book of Isaiah: "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Here we clearly perceive that the punishment prefigured by the valley of Hinnom, where the worm died not, and the fire was not quenched, was to be experienced in this world, where there are carcasses, and where the subjects of this dread punishment could be an abhorring unto all FLESH.

Now when we come to the New Testament we find our Lord using the word *Gehenna* without attempting an explanation of its meaning! If Jesus had used this word in a sense different from that in which the prophets of the Old Testament used it, we have every reason to believe that he would have given some intimation of this change of signification. He exhorted the Jews to "search the Scriptures"! But if he used the word *Gehenna* in a new sense, pray how were they to learn any thing about it in the Scriptures?

It is contended by the learned advocates of popular theology, that, notwithstanding the

word *Gehenna* literally and primarily, means a valley near the city of Jerusalem, and was afterwards used figuratively to denote the temporal calamities coming upon the Jewish nation, in process of time it was used as an emblem to designate a place or state of endless misery for the wicked. And they actually endeavor to establish the existence of the reality by the use of the emblem! On this supposed emblematical meaning of the word in question, rests the whole superstructure of the doctrine of endless misery!

"Good God on what a slender thread

Hang everlasting things!"

But when the word began to be used in this new sense, or whether its meaning was changed by human or divine authority, our learned doctors cannot tell. Still they persist in maintaining that the emblem really proved the existence of the reality; and that no emblem could be more fully chosen to represent the endless suffering of the damned! Now we admit that the emblem is good enough; but the existence of the reality must first be proved before the emblem is applied to it. We never attempt to prove the existence of a man by an examination of his likeness. The very thing that ought to be proved is generally assumed without proof. It is taken for granted that there is a place of endless misery, and then the word *Gehenna* is used as being emblematical of it. They who thus argue remind me of the man who declared positively that there was a personal devil, and he knew it. Upon being asked how he knew it, he thus replied: "Why if there was not a personal devil, how could there be such a good likeness of him in John Rogers' primer?" Just so it is with those who attempt to prove the doctrine of endless misery by the word *Gehenna*. If there is not a place of endless misery, they cannot understand how so good an emblem of it could ever have found its way into the New-Testament!! We protest against proving the existence of realities by the use of emblems.

New-London, Conn.

A. M.

[Our readers will gladly recognize the initials, to the following poetical favor, after so long an absence from our columns. We have barely room here to prefer the request, May we not hope to see them oftener?]

FOR THE MESSENGER AND UNIVERSALIST.

WE LOVED.

We met, we loved. A sunset gleam was straying
'Mid the dim graves where, strangers first we met,
And Autumn winds upon their wild harps playing,
And yellow leaves with tears of evening wet.
We met, we loved. Oh grief hath power to waken,
With its dark weeds, a tenderness which ne'er
Decays with time, and we were all forsaken—
The last lone watchers o'er a household bier.

We loved, as Orphan sisters, who have broken
Full oft the bread of bitterness and wo;
As isolated beings, who have spoken
A farewell to the world of pride and show.
We loved with that devotedness, which buries
All thoughts of others in oblivion's sea—
With that endearing confidence, which parries
The shafts of malice and adversity.

We loved. Through every season, one deep feeling,
One joy, one grief, one prayer, one pulse was ours;
Whether stern winter's voice were o'er us pealing,
Or gentle sunshine gilding April showers.
Night ever found us at God's altar bending;
Morn saw our hands, e'en as our hearts, entwined—
Our soaring spirits, as our voices blending,
In that sweet union earth can ne'er unbind.

We loved. A tress of silken hair is lying
Within my hand, more precious than the light;
She took it from her angel brow while dying,
And faintly smiled upon the token bright.
Oh blessed sister! when dark earth releaseth
Her trusting hearts, so long, so sternly proved,
Will not the eye, which kindred spirit seeketh,
Say in one deep, and thrilling glance—WE LOVED?

J. H. K.

MESSENGER & UNIVERSALIST.

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1835.

EXPOSITION.

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Luke xiii, 3, 5.

There is something truly humiliating in the reflection that human prejudices may become so strong, as effectually to close the mind to the reception of truth, and sometimes perhaps even to forbid its acknowledgement of the truth when persuaded of it. Such prejudice is seldom found more inveterate than in some believers of endless misery, and particularly in relation to some few passages of scripture. A certain meaning is, perhaps in early youth, attached to a passage, and must forever after be attached to it, in despite of argument and knowledge to the contrary.

The declaration of our Savior quoted above, may be taken as an example. Who has not heard it repeated almost numberless times, for the pious purpose of alarming careless sinners and exciting them to immediate repentance. "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish!" The connexion is either forgotten or despised, the very phraseology itself is neglected, and a meaning attached to the passage as foreign to its original import, as falsehood is to truth. In the first place the word *perish* is assumed to imply the idea of endless misery, contrary both to its usual meaning, and the obvious sense of the context. And in the second place an important word in the passage is virtually discarded. And yet with these facts glaring them in the face, there are but too many ministers perpetually quoting this passage for the purpose before alluded to.

The occasion which called forth this declaration from our Savior was as follows, "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with the sacrifices. And Jesus answering, said unto them, suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things? I tell you Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you Nay: but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish."

Two facts are here mentioned. 1st, That Pilate had mingled the blood of certain Galileans with the Jewish sacrifices. 2d, That the tower in Siloam fell and killed eighteen of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Those who told the Savior of the first seem to have thought that such a death was indicative of uncommon sin in those who suffered it. "I tell you Nay," said Christ, "but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

The word *likewise* here has great force. The original signifies in the same, or, a similar, manner. The question therefore arises how did the Galileans and those eighteen above mentioned perish. Answer, the first were slain probably while offering their sacrifices in the temple, and their blood thus mingled with their sacrifices; while the last were crushed to death under the ruins of a falling tower.

The Jews were threatened with the same, or a similar fate in case they did not repent. "Ye shall all likewise perish." Or as Doddridge paraphrases it, "Vengeance will overtake you in your evil ways, and, in the desolating judgments that will shortly come on your whole nation, the blood of many of you shall be mingled with your sacrifices," and on verse 5 he adds, "You shall be pressed under the insupportable load of the divine vengeance, and be destroyed under the ruins of that holy city in which you trust."

The language of our Savior proved awfully prophetic.—Less than forty years had passed, when the temple was flowing with the blood of worshippers, and of priests sacrificing at its altar, and Jerusalem was a heap of ruins, under which had perished, so to speak, the whole nation. Let any one read Josephus, (War, book vi, chaps. 4, 5 and 6,) and he cannot fail of seeing the awful threatening of our Lord most awfully verified.

So obvious is this exposition that no commentator deserving the name, to whose writings we have had access, even pretend to any other, at least as the true one. Dr. A. Clarke says, "This prediction was literally fulfilled.—When the city was taken by the Romans, multitudes of the priests, &c. who were going on with their sacrifices were slain and their blood mingled with the blood of their victims; and multitudes were buried under the ruins of the walls, houses and temples." Other Commentators are to the

same effect. "This was fulfilled," says the Ordinary Gloss, "after the passion of our Lord, when the Romans destroyed the impenitent Jews beginning even from Galilee;" and Nicholas De Lyra adds, "This was accomplished by Titus and Vespasian in the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and the cutting off of the Jewish people." With these agree Cornelius a Lapide who quotes a number of the most respectable Catholic Commentators.—Among Protestants this interpretation is, so far as we know, universal. See Paige's Selections where Hammond, Whitby, Pearce, Rosenmuller, Calmet, &c. are quoted.

We are sometimes tempted to ask why, with these facts before them, modern preachers' are so fond of quoting this passage, as if it were of universal application, and had direct reference to the eternal world? Do they not know that it was spoken to the Jews,—and that it has been fulfilled? Do they not know that by using it in the manner they do, they are guilty of misapplying and abusing the language of inspiration? And do they not moreover know that to all who are acquainted with the opinions of the learned, or are disposed to read and understand for themselves, they betray either a very pitiable ignorance, or a still more pitiable disposition to deceive those more ignorant than themselves? S.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST—A Parody.

Thou hast loved us, dearest Savior,
Through many changing years,
And still thy gracious kindness
To us in love appears.
We have never known a sorrow,
That was long unsoothed by thee,
For thy smile can make a summer,
Where darkness else would be.

Like the leaves that fall around us
In autumn's fading hours,
Oft fades the world's affection,
When the cloud of sorrow lowers.
And though we meet with many,
Whom adverse days estrange,
We still rejoice in knowing,
That thou wilt never change.

Thou hast loved us, dearest Savior,
Through many changing years,
And thine unfailing mercy,
Has changed to joy our tears.
And we believe the future,
As the past has been, will be;
For thou wilt love us ever,
And we will live to thee.

A. C. T.

GOD IS OUR FATHER.

We have been taught by our divine Master, that no man knoweth God but the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him. And what new views of the divine character did the Son of God reveal? Surely, he drew it in no harsher lines than Moses and the prophets had before employed.—No: but he discovered and made his disciples feel one new relation existing between God and the race of mankind. *God is our Father.* O, hallowed name! endearing appellation! What a throng of tender and delightful associations gather around it. It throws us back again into the scenes of childhood and youth, and brings to mind the beings who watched over our infancy, and led us with perpetual kindnesses up to manhood. It tells us of waking nights, and weary days spent in ministering to our wants, and alleviating our sufferings. It speaks to us of a debt which we have not yet repaid.

God is our Father. His affections, his government, his laws, his punishments, are all such as belong to a Father.—The kindness of a Father surrounds and blesses us in this lower world—it will accompany us into that beyond the grave and discover itself in still higher gifts, and call upon us for still larger returns of gratitude and love.

Let then the christian dwell upon this glorious truth. Let him speak of it to his family and friends, when he rises up and when he sits down, when he is in the field and when by the way-side. It possesses a melting and sanctifying power. It appeals to the heart of man with a force that he cannot, he wishes not, to resist. He yields to it as to the voice of truth, of Heaven, and rejoices. He feels that God is his father, and he knows that he is good. He goes out and gazes on his visible works. "In wisdom," his heart says within him, "hast thou made then all."—Wherever he turns his eye, he sees beauty and loveliness.

The sun in his glory speaks of the goodness of God. The moon's softer radiance whispers of uncreated and universal kindness. The earth with its flowers and beauty, its waving fields, its gushing fountains, proclaims the beneficence and wisdom of Heaven.

How clear the truth that nature and revelation owe their origin to one common source. They speak the same language and utter, though in different voices, the same truth. But nature goes no farther than the grave, while revelation pursuing the path which they had hitherto held in common, stretches beyond and makes new discoveries, and reveals new and infinitely greater blessings, yet in store for us, in the boundless treasure house of a Father's love. God is our Father! S.

THE VERNON STORY—AGAIN.

Three weeks since we published a letter from Br. S. R. Smith, accompanied by one from Br. S. Bingham, of Vernon, as also some certificates, on the subject of the death-bed renunciation of Universalism in Vernon, as related by Mr. Slocum, in the Orchard-street Church. We stated that Mr. S. had informed us that we had mistaken the name—it was *Buck*, instead of *Burke*, and we therefore desired Br. Bingham to renew his inquiries for the new name, though we had little confidence in any other result, should it be changed from *Buck*, successively, to all the endless variety of terminations to that word! Indeed—we may as well speak it out—we have no confidence whatever in these stories, as usually related by Limitarians, and we are always constrained to think much worse of a man, when we hear him retailing them. It seems to be a virtual acknowledgment from the individual's own lips, that he is destitute of argument, and will not hesitate to resort to any means, however contemptible, in the (delusive) hope of working an interest in his favor, rather than abide the issue of calm and frank investigation. *Victory! Victory!* seems to be the all-absorbing object. Let him but seem victorious to the eye of weak, frail man, and it appears to be regarded of but little moment how much his conduct may be scanned by the eye of Omnipotence!

We have ferreted out so many of these representations, even in our short life time, and they have invariably vanished into thin air, the moment an investigation took place, that we cannot, if we would, rely upon them. Their direct and inevitable tendency is to create entire distrust in their reporters. They have been proved false so many times, that it is impossible to hear them alluded to, without falsehood being immediately associated with them in the mind. And it would be a consideration well worthy of the attention of the Limitarian clergy, how much the indulgence of this pitiable spirit of story-telling detracts from the confidence that would otherwise be reposed in them. They will ever be deemed less excusable than the laity, for they may well be supposed to possess greater facilities for learning the truth. And beside, they are not justified in wielding any weapons, professedly in the cause of christian truth, but such as are furnished them by the Gospel of Jesus.

In respect to the story under consideration, the circumstances were peculiar under which it was reported here.—Mr. Slocum had been several evenings lecturing in one of our churches. He had, generally speaking, manifested much frankness and candor—at least much compared with what we have usually experienced at the hands of our opposers. At the time we asked for particulars, he professed a perfect confidence in the truth of the story—if we mistake not, he remarked in connexion with this, that he had stated nothing but what he had good evidence for believing to be fact. In consideration of the general candor manifested by him, we felt willing to trace out the report, though in our mind, we were then almost as confident of the result, as at this moment. We have investigated it thoroughly, and in conclusion present the following additional communication just received from Br. Bingham, of Vernon. We need not comment upon it. It will sufficiently speak for itself.

Br. PRICE—The Christian Messenger, containing your request for further information with regard to the *Vernon Story*, has been duly received. I discover that you misunderstood Mr. Slocum in the name of the person, who it is said renounced Universalism on a death bed. Well! then let the name be changed from *BURKE*, to *BUCK*, and from that to as many others as can be made out from the letters of the English Alphabet, and the statement will still remain true, that "no occurrence of the kind

ever took place in the town of Vernon." This I say without the fear of contradiction; neither have I any reason to believe that any thing of the kind ever took place in this section of country.

If the story of a death-bed renunciation of Universalism is of as much importance to the sustaining of the doctrine of orthodoxy, as one would suppose by their manner of telling them, it would seem that they ought to be at some little trouble in ascertaining their truth. Let then the laboring oar be put into their hands.

Yours, in Gospel faith,
SIMON BINGHAM.

Vernon, April 18th, 1835.

We now call upon Mr. Slocum, if he has any testimony to gainsay what has been published in our columns in refutation of his story, to present it. If he can make good the statement which he so solemnly presented as good and sufficient reason why Universalists should abandon their faith, let us have it by all means. If he has been deceived in the matter, let him promptly acknowledge it. He owes it to himself, to Universalists, whom he voluntarily assailed; yea, to the cause of truth and righteousness, either to make good his statement,* or publicly renounce it. P.

* As this No. may go into the hands of many who are not regular readers of the Messenger, we briefly state for the information of such, that Rev. Mr. Slocum, (of the Presbyterian Church,) recently delivered a course of "Lectures on the Difficulties of Universalism," in the 2d Universalist Church in Orchard-st. by special request of its Pastor, Mr. Sawyer. At the close, he related the story of a Mr. Buck, of Vernon, who was an active Universalist, but who had two pious daughters who were much distressed on account of their father's heresy. They importuned him to that degree that he finally told them to say no more to him on the subject—when he came to die, he could certify to them whether Universalism was true or false.—He was shortly laid on a bed of death, and his Universalism vanished, and he testified that it had ruined his soul forever! The letter of Mr. Bingham, will show how much foundation there was for the story.

DIVINE GOODNESS.

Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. Rom. ii, 4.

WHITEY's paraphrase is as follows: "Not knowing [or discerning] that the goodness of God [naturally] leadeth thee to repentance, [and is a powerful motive to engage thee to it?]"

In commenting on the apostolical testimony before us, I remark, 1st. That the impenitent are the objects of divine goodness; otherwise there would be no propriety in the declaration, that the goodness of God naturally leads to repentance. In view of this obvious inference, I cannot perceive how the doctrine can be consistently preached, that man, in a state of impenitency, is obnoxious to the curse of the unmerciful justice of God, even should it be conceded that such a paradoxical attribute belongs to the Almighty. And once admitted that the impenitent are the objects of the goodness aforesaid, the doctrine of endless woe is left without foundation, and must consequently be discarded by all who would maintain consistency of faith.

It is written that God "is kind to the unthankful and the evil. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." These, and many testimonies of correspondent tenor, plainly confirm the inference drawn from the text. And should it be contended that, although the impenitent are in this world the objects of Divine goodness, they will be the subjects of interminable vengeance in the next, I remark, that this would suppose a total change in one of the most prominent attributes of the Divine character. And should it be argued, that it would be incompatible with Divine justice for God to manifest his goodness in the future state to the impenitent, this is my reply: It remains to be shown that impenitency will or can exist beyond this mortal life; and even were this point clearly established, it should be remembered that the justice of God is as unalterable as his goodness; and if it be not inconsistent with the former to manifest the latter to the impenitent in this world, inconsistency would not be involved in a similar state of things in the next.

2d. In the text before us, repentance is mentioned as the effect, and not the procuring cause, of the goodness of God. It is not a little remarkable that every doctrinal system, excepting Universalism, inverts the apostolical order adverted to. The wisdom of this world declares, that man must repent before he can properly be assured of the goodness of heaven; but we are plainly certified, by the wisdom from above, that he who is impenitent can only be converted from the error of his ways by being made duly sensible of the fact, that he has ever been, and ever will be, an object of Divine

benevolence, in whatever circumstances he may have been, or may yet be placed. The converting power of the Gospel must be sought for in this broad principle of celestial truth. "While we were yet enemies, Christ died for us—for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins." Jesus was the commendation of the love of God to a sinful and unbelieving world. Universal, unchanging love, is the Alpha and Omega of the Gospel economy. And herein is warranted the declaration of the text, that repentance is but the legitimate effect, and not the procuring cause, of the goodness of God. Were this plain principle recognized in the faith, and admitted in the labors of religious teachers, the harmony of the testimonies of Holy Writ would be beautifully preserved, and men would perceive with wonder and rejoicing the altogether lovely character of the Father of us all.

3d. Should it be objected, that, notwithstanding the displays of Divine goodness with which the impenitent have ever been favored, there is much guilt and much consequent misery in the world, this is my reply: So far as men have been brought to a realizing sense of the goodness of God, so far they have broken "off their sins by righteousness and their iniquities by turning to the Lord." The reason why so many are impenitent is stated with sufficient distinctness in the language of the text. "Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance," that is, with such there is a want of discernment. To know or discern a thing, implies the independent existence of the thing known or discerned; and while it cannot be justly denied that the impenitent are the objects of Divine goodness, it must be conceded that very many are still in ignorance of this precious truth. When I say that in such cases the goodness aforesaid is not discerned, I mean, not that the outward senses can fail to acknowledge the general goodness of the Lord, but that there is not that personal, individual recognition of Divine goodness which is a constituent element of converting and transforming power. Each member of the human family should be brought to feel that he is the object of the goodness of God. There is a proneness in man to forget the parts in the contemplation of the aggregate. Let this error be corrected, especially in reference to the love of God. Let each individual heartily realize for himself, that he is favored and blessed of heaven, and emotions of love and of gratitude will spontaneously arise. A godly sorrow for sins that are past will ensue, and future demeanor will evince that the goodness of God has effected a reformation of life.

A. C. T.

THE NEW CHURCH.

We can but poorly express the gratification we feel in calling the attention of our New-York readers to the following notice, (the laying of the corner stone of the new church, for the 3d Universalist Society in this city.) We most devoutly hope the day may be propitious, and that all who feel an interest in the progress of the doctrine to be promulgated from the new Desk, will make it their duty to be present on the occasion.

Friends, for once let business be put aside. It will be a period, we trust, long to be remembered in the annals of Universalism in this city. The unparalleled success of the doctrine here, for a few years past, its present highly prosperous situation, the bright anticipations we feel justified in indulging in for the future, all combine to throw an interest about the occasion of no common character. Who would have felt justified, six years back, in calculating upon such an event at this time? Let us meet, then, on that occasion, and rejoice together over the great blessings which have been so bountifully bestowed upon us. P.

NOTICE.

The corner stone of the THIRD UNIVERSALIST CHURCH, to be erected at the corner of Bleecker and Downing streets, will be laid on Tuesday the 5th of May, at 5 o'clock P. M. The Society, and all others desirous of attending the ceremony, are requested to assemble in the Universalist church, in the Sixth Avenue, at half past 4 o'clock.

LETTER FROM MR. SLOCUM.

Mr. P. PRICE,

Sir—You wish me to inform you whether I have recently asserted, that in the Lectures at the Orchard-street Church, I brought forward 14 distinct and positive proofs of endless misery, and that Mr. Sawyer had acknowledged to me that they were such? I answer, no.

But this I said to a Universalist woman who alleged, from the overflows of her ignorance on the subject, that I produced no Scripture in proof of my doctrine—that I

brought forward in a single Lecture 14 texts of Scripture, which I considered, as directly asserting the doctrine of eternal punishment. She then charged me with manifesting an unchristian spirit during the discussion; to which I replied that she was mistaken, for Mr. Sawyer himself, after the discussion was closed, publicly thanked me for the kindness of my spirit.

If the story you speak of has not been manufactured out of the above, I am at a loss to conjecture whence it originated.

Yours respectfully,
J. J. SLOCUM.

New-York, April 27th.

Remarks.

We readily insert the foregoing from Mr. Slocum, in notice of the letter we addressed him last week. It will be seen to be an explicit denial of the representations made to us. Those representations came from persons in whom we reposed confidence, or we should not, of course, have given publicity to them. As this No. goes to press earlier than usual for our paper, in consequence of issuing an extra edition, we have not had an opportunity to communicate with those of whom we received our information directly. We shall lose no time, however, in doing it. If there is misapprehension, or misrepresentation, we desire it may be rectified. We suppose that we are intimately acquainted with the "Universalist woman" to whom he alludes; and we really have never discovered a superabounding ignorance with her on the subject of religion. But we do not appear as her apologist. We presume she can speak for herself. P.

BACK NOS. OF THIS VOLUME.

We again desire those who have begun their subscriptions since the commencement of the present volume, and those who may be now commencing, to signify to us as early as possible whether they desire the back Nos. to complete their volume for binding. A little attention to the matter now will accommodate both ourselves and them.

We are led to be more particular on this point, from the fact that several who subscribed during the progress of the 3d vol. have sent in since it closed, desiring their volumes to be completed, when we could not possibly do it, without breaking sets, of which we have but a limited supply.—Whereas, if they had merely taken the pains to notify us early, we could probably have saved them in some cases from subsequent subscribers without material inconvenience. Will those, therefore, interested in the case give early attention to the subject. P.

THE PRESENT NUMBER.

We cannot but hope, will prove especially acceptable to our readers. The interesting Prize Tale, from the pen of Mrs. Downer, will sufficiently commend itself. We have not room, and neither is it necessary, to particularize. The contributors are mostly known to our regular readers, by their signatures, and we need only say of ALL,—we should be rejoiced to see them much oftener in our columns.

Original.

THE DICTATES OF PRUDENCE.

Many persons reject Universalism on the ground of prudence, and refuse to believe in the final restitution of all things, assuring us that, admitting the possibility of its correctness, it would be more prudent to receive another sentiment. Leaving all such persons to reconcile their prudence, with the wisdom and prudence of God, (as recorded in Eph. i, 7—11,) I wish to notice a few sentiments which prudence would dictate us to avoid.

1. It is imprudent to say that the doctrine of the final restitution of all things is an error, for it is plainly and positively taught in Acts iii, 21.

2. It is imprudent to say that God does not will the salvation of all men, because St. Paul says "God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth;" 1 Tim. ii, 4.

3. It is imprudent to say that God's will can be frustrated, for we read that "he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" Eph. i, 11.

4. It is imprudent to attempt to obviate this testimony by the subterfuge, that the word will means only to desire, because the Bible affirms that the "desire of the righteous shall be granted;" Prov. x, 24.

5. It is imprudent to call death, eternal, because the phrase, eternal death, is not in the Bible; and because we find there the promise that "death shall be swallowed up in victory;" 1 Cor. xv, 54.

6. It is imprudent to declare that from hell there is no redemption, because David says, "thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell;" Ps. lxxxvi, 13.

7. It is imprudent to call sin, eternal, because it cannot extend beyond death; Rom. v, 21; and because the Messiah is "to finish transgression and make an end of sin;" Dan. ix, 24; 1 Cor. xv, 56, 57.

8. It is imprudent to advocate the doctrine of endless misery, and attempt to prove it by Matt. xxv, 46, because if such a step is taken, we must, to be consistent, contend also that the Jews still hold the land of Canaan, though they lost it many centuries ago—that the priesthood of Aaron is unchanged, though Paul declares that it was changed in his time; and also that the mountain, which Habbakuk saw scattered, yet remains, and will, through all eternity, as all these things are called everlasting as well as punishment. See Gen. xvii, 18. Exodus xl, 15. Hab. iii, 6.

9. It is imprudent to hang eternal consequences upon finite actions, for two reasons—1st. It will distract the mind from the important duties of life, and while devising means to escape unreal evils, it will be unprepared to meet the ills of life; and when firmly believed it will dethrone reason and judgment, and leave the mind a wreck. 2d. Because the Saviour hath said, "*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*"

10. It is imprudent to preach endless misery, because it does not produce the same effects which the gospel of the Saviour produced. The gospel creates great comfort, joy and peace, but endless misery produces great disquietude, sorrow and wo. The gospel, bound up the broken hearted; endless misery breaks the whole hearted. The gospel gives peace and hope; endless misery gives disquietude and despair. The gospel makes the sorrowful rejoice; endless misery makes the happy sorrowful. The power of Christ clothed the insane man in his right mind; the power of endless misery deranges the intellect, destroys reason, and makes the sane man a maniac. "By their fruits ye shall know them," saith the Saviour; Mat. vii, 20.

11. It is imprudent to say that the reconciliation of all things to God is displeasing to him, because he has promised this state of things, "according to his own good pleasure;" Eph. i, 9.

12. It is imprudent to say that the gospel will fail of accomplishing the purpose of Him who sent it, because God has declared "that it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it;" Isai. lv, 10, 11.

13. And finally, it is imprudent to contend that frail, finite man, can frustrate the purposes and designs of God, for God hath said, "My counsel shall stand, I will do all my pleasure;" Isai. xlvi, 9, 10. M. H. S.

Hartford, Conn.

Original.

A THOUGHT.

Who, that believes Christianity, whatever may be his peculiar views, if he should hear an Infidel, a contemner of all religion, a despiser of the pure, the soul-refreshing and ennobling religion of Jesus, declare that it represented that the inhabitants of the heaven it promises were all to become Nero's, in order to be qualified to partake of its joys, and making this a ground of objection to, and an excuse for his hostility to it, would not repel the charge with disdain?—All, under such circumstances, would pronounce the charge false and slanderous. But we would ask, how much short of this is the doctrine that men, in the world to come, are to be divested of

all their tender sensibilities and sympathetic feelings, and come to look on the most accute human suffering with entire complacency?

Alas! if heaven be a place where men are to be divested of all those principles which now so deeply interest mankind, or call forth their reverence, and exalts the godlike Howard so much above the infamous Nero, in the estimation of men in this world; and the human heart is to undergo such an entire metamorphosis as to view the most deep and abiding misery of our race with perfect composure, without one sympathetic emotion for them, or one tear of pity for their miserable fate, we are entirely unable to determine the difference between such a heaven, and hell, for its inhabitants seem to be possessed of the same fiendish and abominable spirit as Milton ascribes to his devils. Oh, their joy is a fiendish, a hellish satisfaction!

I must say, for one, if we are to have all the kindly principles of our nature taken away, and be so transformed in the essential properties of our present constitution as to view the everlasting misery of our friends, or any of the human race, with entire composure, if not real satisfaction, it is a heaven which has no charms for me! Hell presents no greater terrors to the mind, portray it as bad as imagination can conceive, than such a heaven! To me, with my present constitution, it would be the worst hell, because we should be stripped of all that is peculiar to virtuous humanity and which ministers to our highest, deepest and soul-satisfying pleasure.—From such a heaven, I can pray in the sincerity of my heart, "Good Lord deliver us."

I repeat it. A heaven, where all the better feelings of our nature are to be stifled, and where we are to be stripped of what now constitutes our highest excellence, and distinguishes us from the most brutal savage, has no charms for me; and was it my last expiring breath, I should pray to be delivered from it. So those who refuse me the christian name, on account of my supposed errors, if they wish to alarm and terrify me, instead of threatening me with the endless pains of their hell, may promise me a seat in the heaven which their system of faith unfolds; for sure I am, I should be more alarmed if I thought I should go there, than in prospect of such a residence as the rich man had in Hades. Let me be disposed of as I may, I earnestly desire to retain the same alliance with my race, the same sympathy for their sufferings, that I now have, and I shall enjoy a satisfaction that the cold hearted stoic of a selfish heaven may well envy. D. F.

Chester, Vt., April 9, 1835.

HUDSON RIVER ASSOCIATION.

The Hudson River Association of Universalists, will hold a special session, in the city of New-York, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 11th and 12th of June next. Ministering brethren and all friends are affectionately invited to attend. Per order. I. D. WILLIAMSON, Clerk.

NEW-YORK STATE CONVENTION.

The Universalist Convention of the State of New-York will hold its annual session at Cooperstown, Otsego county, on the last Wednesday and Thursday (27th and 28th days) of May inst.

ASSOCIATIONS IN NEW YORK.

The fourteen Universalist Associations in this State will be holden at the following times and places:—

Central, at Lebanon, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in June.
Niagara, at Gaines, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in June.
Mohawk River, at Russia, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in June.
Black River, at Mexico, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in June.
St. Lawrence, at Hopkinton, on the fourth Wednesday and Thursday in June.
Otsego, at Hartwick, on the fourth Wednesday and Thursday in June.
Allegany, at (place not yet fixed) on the fourth Wednesday and Thursday in June.
Genesee, at Covington, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in August.

Chautauque, at Lodi, Cattaraugus county, on the fourth Wednesday and Thursday in August.

Chenango, at South New-Berlin, on the last Wednesday and Thursday in August.

Steuben, at Dundee, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in September.

Hudson River, at Hudson, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September.

Ontario, at Fairport, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September.

Cayuga, at Onondaga Hill, or vicinity, on the last Wednesday and Thursday in September.

Magazine and Advocate.

* * Our Brethren of the "Inquirer and Anchor," will bear in mind that our remark, to which they allude, had reference to *appearance* altogether, not *quality*. An individual may possess an ill-looking *head*, and at the same time have a most excellent *heart*. This is proverbial in respect to *features*. If we see an individual, who, in common parlance, is "hard-favored," we almost invariably pronounce him a "clever person." We repeat, we spoke of the *appearance* of the "head" of their paper—its *columns* had received our marked approbation in the same paragraph. We doubt not for a moment, that it, and they, have excellent *hearts*.

* * We shall send to agents and special friends in different sections, extra copies of the present No. which they can dispose of according to their discretion. We shall be thankful for the efforts of any or all of our patrons in extending the circulation of the paper. Individuals, not subscribers, who receive this No. and who do not wish to continue it, will please hand the same over to others in the circle of their acquaintance.

* * We have for some days been looking for a line from our esteemed friend R. N. of Hightstown, on the subject of the MSS. he recently forwarded us. We wrote him by the individual who left the package, as to the expense of Pamphlets, &c. and are only waiting now to know whether they wish the Pamphlets in order to determine what sized type to put it in. Will he let us hear from him immediately?

CLINTON LIBERAL INSTITUTE.

The present term of the Liberal Institute will close on the 8th, and the Summer term commence on the 27th day of May inst. The ladies' school of the Institute will close and commence again at the same time. The best accommodations can be had for the students.

J. STEBBINS,	} Executive	T. SMITH,	
D. PIXLEY,		} Committee.	E. S. BARNUM.
J. W. HALE,			

* * Editors friendly to unsectarian institutions of learning will please copy the above.

Married.

In Philadelphia, on Thursday evening, 16th inst., by Evangelist Abel C. Thomas, Mr. ALEXANDER BROWN and Miss ELIZABETH LANDY, both of the Northern Liberties.

On the same evening, by the same, Mr. JOSEPH G. HIBBS and Miss MARGARET SHEBLE, both of Philadelphia.

On the evening of Jan. 1st, by the same, Mr. GEORGE DUBOSE and Miss MARY ANN EARLY, both of Philadelphia.

Died.

In New-York, on the 23d ult. Mrs. LYDIA R., wife of Mr. Wilson Small, aged 28 years.

The value and powers of the christian faith in sustaining one under severe and protracted bodily sufferings, and in preparing us for that great change, which all must sooner or later meet, was strikingly exemplified in the case of Mrs. Small. It is expected that a Funeral Discourse will be delivered in the Orchard-st. Church, a week from to-morrow afternoon, (10th inst.) after which, a more particular Obituary notice may be given.

In New-York, on the 23d ult. Mr. JAMES BURGESS, aged 20 years.

In New-York, on the 26th ult. JOHN PETER, son of Mr. P. C. Cortelyou, aged 7 years.

Religious Notices.

Br. C. Woodhouse, of Lansingburgh, will preach at Newark, N. J., on the 4th Sabbath in May.

Br. B. B. H. Lock, will preach in Newark, the 2d Sabbath in May, a week from to-morrow.

Br. L. C. Marvin, will preach in Danbury, Conn. 2d and 3d Sabbaths in May.

Br. F. Hitchcock, will preach in Trumbull, Conn. Saturday evening, May 2d; at Stratford, morning and afternoon of Sunday, May 3d, and at Bridgeport in the evening. He will also preach in Monroe, the 3d Sabbath in May.

(For Br. Dodge's and Bulkeley's notices see last paper.)

Original.

NATURE'S BEAUTIES.

Dost thou love Nature's beauties? Has thy heart
A chord which vibrates to her melody?
And hast thou oft perused her book of many
Pages? Then bid sweet memory, from her
Hoarded store, bring forth a picture of some
Beauty in each season's changing round.

* * * * *
'Tis summer morn! and the all-glowing
East her gates of jasper, and of pearl unfold.
O'er the far mountain-tops, forth streams the light;
Touching the sky, of summer's softest blue,
Up to the zenith—with a rosy hue.
O'er the still waters, hangs a veil-like mist
Of shining gossamer; and the green-sward
Is glittering with a wreath of dew drops,
Of the all-varied hues of earth's uncounted
Gems. A hum of happy insects fills the
Air; while the bright flowers hail the awaking
Day, with joyful tears; and every warbling
Bird, lifting its little head from downy
Rest, pours forth a hymn of gladness and of
Praise—making the morn melodious.

* * * * *
The landscape changes to a summer eve—
And gorgeous clouds, which well might serve for
Houri's robes, borrow their coloring from
The sun's farewell. Quickly they fade, and with
Their darkened folds, curtain the west. But look!
The lightning's sudden flash is there, and now
Like a bright thought, 'tis gone! Saw ye domes, towers,
And palaces, all with that dazzling gleam
Lit up? Surely yon ebon cloud doth veil
A city of the blest! Again the flash!
But pillars, domes, and palaces, are there
No more; and rocks of brazen gold lift up
Their heads, where but a moment since, the
Fancy city stood. But now the queenly
Moon, ascends her sapphire throne, with all the
Bright, the star-eyed damsels of her train
In waiting round, and the dark clouds disperse
Before her radiant smile.

* * * * *
See pictured now, a sunny autumn noon!
Blue, deeply blue, the skies, and brightly clear;
Save that a few light clouds of fleecy silver,
Spreading their dazzling drapery, glide along—
The waters lying in a waveless sleep,
Back to the skies, reflect a blue as deep.
Decay's dark footsteps have yet left untouched
The velvet mead; and scarce a change of hue
Has marred the foliage of the fruit bent
Trees; and over all comes down the sun's
Untreasured beams, making all fair things
Lovelier, like beauty's smile.

* * * * *
Winter is waving now her sable locks,
Twin'd with the jewelry of night's regalia.
The silent earth is robed like a young bride
In spotless white; and the sharp icy air,
With unseen fairy fingers, round the bare trees
Fantastic tracery, its frost-work weaves;
Praise should be thine, Oh God! for scenes like these.
Thou hast bid nature paint with loveliest dyes;
And all her works have beauty's eloquence;
Reaching the pure heart's depths, with meaning plain
As words.

Those who her language love, find many themes
Pleasant for thought to dwell upon; giving
A brighter tinge of happiness, to Time's
Still hastening flight.

M. A. D.
Greenville, (Hartford,) Conn.

Original.

HOPE.

Although the poet has been censured by some
for saying that "hope springs eternal in the hu-
man breast," we think that reason and experi-
ence unite to corroborate the truth of the senti-
ment. In every age and country, in whatever
circumstances man has been placed, the pleas-
ing anticipation of future good has ever attend-
ed the first dawns of knowledge on the hu-
man mind.

The ardent and impetuous youth is full of
hope. She points him to a fairy land, strewn
with the choicest flowers of life; he dreams of
the joys of manhood, the various privileges of
riper years; he sees in the days that are to come,
happiness and ease, a long life of unmingled de-
light. She tells him of sunny smiles, and cheer-
ful prosperity, and feeds his glowing fancy with
all the pleasing images of earthly bliss. But
alas! how little does he know of the cares of
this bustling world, the uncertainty of riches,
the inconstancy of friends, and the relentless
darts of adversity. He little thinks that the
storm is impending which in a moment may
blast his brightest expectations, and "like the
baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck be-
hind."

Have you not seen the beautiful and guile-
less female in whose innocent bosom dwelled
pleasing, animating hope. She mingled in the
gay assembly, her light form circled in the
dance, her comeliness dwelled on every tongue,
and he was blest and happy that could recognize
from her an approving smile. She hoped for a
long, peaceful life of enjoyment, caressed by
the gay, flattered by the praises of youth, and she
little thought that these halcyon days were to be
succeeded by the sad reverses of this changeful
world. Yet amid all the "sad variety of pain"
which flesh is heir to, hope still points to better
days, to the scenes of the future crowned with
the laurels of pleasure.

This passion of the human mind is not con-
fined to the young; the middle-aged and the
old, alike partake its disappointments and its
joys. Like the joyful rays of the morning sun
upon the earth, or the softer light of the welcome
moon as she bursts from the gloomy clouds, so
hope lights up our spirits and "kindles a smile
in the aspect of woe." When disappointments
and the ghosts of departed joys surround our
path, this kind gift of heaven stands ready like
a ministering angel to point our weary souls to
brighter scenes yet to come. It is *universal*; all
feel its inspiring energies; it is the good Sama-
ritan pouring in the oil and the wine of conso-
lation to the bruised spirit. Even the untutored
son of the forest feels its life-giving power. Is
he driven from his own native wilds where "the
Great Spirit" has given him the bounding deer
and the panting buffalo, hope cheers his drooping
spirits, and soothes his sorrow, for she points him
to fields beyond the everlasting mountains, where
with his faithful dog, and his unerring gun, he
can hunt and be happy, free from the "red
man's" frown, and the white man's molestation.

What nerves the arm of the brave mariner on
the boisterous ocean, and makes him face un-
moved the fury of the storm? HOPE. She
tells him of the quiet haven, the still waters of
peace, that sport at the foot of his well-loved
home. He is going to his friends, his relatives,
to his own dear fireside. He *hopes* to get there,
to his kindred, his home. His *home*! what an
inspiring word. He has left the sunny isles of
the sea, where the clustering grape, and all the
rich varieties of nature are pouring their delights
into the lap of plenty. But his *home*, his own
loved dwelling, "canopied with snow and drop-
ping with icicles, is dearer than they all." He
grasps with steady arm the trusty helm and hope
buffets the threatening gale.

In all the varied conditions of life, man is the
subject of hope. In the days of childhood it is
a source of amusement, in youth it fills the soul
with animating courage, in manhood it points to
greater and still higher attainments, more lofty
distinctions. In the decline of our years, when
palsied age and infirmity assure us that "man
giveth up the ghost," she scatters in our path-
way to the grave her sweetest flowers. Oh
blessed messenger! kind soother of our sorrows!
how dark would our world be without thy irra-
diating beams. When the howling tempests of
adversity, and the storms of affliction lower

around us, like a gleaming star to the weather-
beaten mariner, it tells us of approaching seren-
ity, of calmer and happier days. And when
the flickering lamp of life is about to be extin-
guished, and nature is sinking under the last
convulsive throb of dissolution, then *christian*
hope, like some guardian angel, points us to the
realms of ceaseless joy, where she will herself
be lost in the full fruition of fadeless beatitude,
and where crowns of uninterrupted glory shall
be ours forever.

B. B. H.

Original

VALUE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Extract of an Address to Young Men.

"The Sacred Scriptures," observes Sebastian
Schmidt, "are an ocean which the contracted-
ness of the human mind, however vast, cannot
fully receive." They are indeed an exhaust-
less fountain of religious instruction. Designed
to enlighten and reform *mankind*, they address
themselves to every age and condition in life;
they have a word for the rich and the poor, for
the high and the low, for the old and the young.
One of the great objects of a revelation, I con-
ceive to be to discover to us our duties and to
excite us to their faithful performance. In the
Holy Bible how admirably is this object attain-
ed. How briefly and yet how plainly are we
taught what we are required to do, and what
would be inconsistent with our nature and con-
dition, and destructive of our peace!

"Wherewithal," says the Psalmist, "shall
a young man cleanse his way? By taking
heed thereto, according to thy word." This
word is able to make us wise unto salvation. It
is replete with divine instructions. It points
out the way of life, and warns us from the path
of folly and danger. Permit me then to exhort
you first of all to study the Bible. Let this be
your companion and your guide. You will find
it a lamp to your feet. In health it should be
your instructor—in prosperity your joy—in sick-
ness and sorrow your consolation—and in the
hour of death it will direct your eye to heaven.

The Bible will teach you of God the Father—
of his love to you and care over you, of the du-
ties you owe him and from which neither lapse
of time nor changes of condition can ever ab-
solve you. It will teach you of Jesus Christ
the beloved of the Father, who, in the name of
God, undertook our redemption. It will tell you
in melting strains of his deep affection—his de-
votion to the cause of man. His life is to be the
example of yours. It becomes you, as purchas-
ed with his blood, to possess his spirit, to obey
his precepts. The Bible will teach you of the
great rewards of well-doing; the peace which
virtue always finds in its own bosom and with
God; and the miseries which vice always pro-
duces. You will here learn the great practical
truth that there is no peace to the wicked; and
though hand join in hand they shall not be un-
punished. Here also you will learn, I trust to
your unspeakable joy, that God has given you
an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled
and fadeth not away, reserved for you in Heav-
en. Let this thought awake your gratitude, and
reflecting on your immortal and glorious destiny,
may you shun with watchful care the vices and
pollutions of the world.

Universalist Books.

A general assortment of BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, &c.,
treating of the doctrine of Universal Salvation FROM sin—
the final restoration of all men to holiness and happiness,
may be found on application at the Publishing Office of the
Messenger and Universalist, No. 2 Marble Building,
Chatham-Square, (foot of Bowery), N. Y. Entrance
in the Drug Store. Friends, and opposers of that senti-
ment, too, are respectfully invited to call and examine the
works. Among them are a great variety of cheap Pam-
phlets, comprising Sermons, &c. Those unacquainted
with Universalism, are especially invited to call. They
will be likely to obtain more correct views of our doctrine,
from our own statements of it, than from those of deeply
prejudiced opposers.